



Natural Resources Conservation Service
6013 Lakeside Blvd.
Indianapolis, IN 46278

INDIANA BULLETIN NO. 440-6-6

September 8, 2006

SUBJECT: PGM – End of the Year Application and Contract Management Activities
in ProTracts

Purpose: This Bulletin updates and cancels Indiana Bulletin 440-6-5. The purpose of this bulletin is to update end of the year application and contract management activities in ProTracts based on guidance received in National Bulletin 440-6-10 and training provided on September 7, 2006.

Expiration Date: December 31, 2006

Background: ProTracts will undergo annual maintenance and new-year setup activities from September 15 through October 8, 2006. This temporary shutdown coincides with a year-end roll-over of FSA eligibility databases, and permits fund synchronization with the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS).

There will be a tiered suspension of activities in ProTracts:

- No new obligations will be processed after September 15, 2006 – Sign button will be disabled.
- Modifications are discouraged after September 15, 2006.
- All (non-CSP) modifications, not approved in ProTracts by September 25, 2006, will be “rolled back” to their pre-modification status. These modifications can be re-entered in ProTracts, beginning October 9, 2006.
- No payments will be approved in ProTracts from October 1, 2006 to October 8, 2006.
 - On September 25, 2006 the last obligations and payments will be transmitted from ProTracts to FFIS (Field/Area office approval in ProTracts).
 - Payment and certification will be disabled in ProTracts as of 6 pm EDT on September 25, 2006.
 - September 26, 2006 to September 27, 2006 states process payment approvals in FFIS (State Office FNM staff).
 - September 27, 2006 last day for payments to be approved in FFIS for transmission to treasury for payment this FY (State Office FNM staff).
- Full ProTracts shutdown will occur on September 30, 2006.
- Full ProTracts operations will resume October 9, 2006.
- For Indiana, DC’s and APS’ need to be aware that the bills for the energy incentive practices need to be submitted to the DC by December 29, 2006, to be eligible for the incentive payment.
- All incentive practice payment information must be entered into ProTracts no later than January 16, 2007, to receive the payment.

Language in Bulletin IN440-6-5 on National Bulletin 440-6-9 concerning options for WHIP Contracts is as follows:

- Urge participants to make every effort to complete WHIP contracts that are not currently in ProTracts.
- Provide participants an opportunity to request cancellation of these older contracts if they cannot meet the contract requirements as agreed.
- If the participant takes no action or does not respond to a letter, take steps to terminate the contract.
- Continue paying WHIP contracts not currently in ProTracts under the current methods.
- All active contracts not currently in ProTracts will have to be put into ProTracts possibly sometime during the Second Quarter of FY 2007. ProTracts software will not be ready until then.

Anticipated changes for FY 2007 in ProTracts:

- Posting of new appendices for each program with greater consistency between programs. EQIP and WHIP Appendices will be one and the same.
- Roll-over of the Adjusted Gross Income and Eligibility databases (FSA).
- Adjustment of cost overrun accounts for each State, fund, and fiscal year.
- Implementation of new modification procedures for minor changes and major modifications over \$10,000 or 20% of contract obligation.
 - The minor changes modification button (modifications less than \$1000/per item) was made active September 8, 2006.
 - See Attached instructions on use of this new feature in ProTracts.
- Revision of NRCS contracting forms to streamline business and align with policy changes in CPM 512 Conservation Program Contracting.
- New Contracting Manual scheduled out by September 30, 2006 with the following new forms:
 - New NRCS-CPA-1200 form – This will be the Contract Application form for EQIP, WHIP and CSP (no longer the contract form) (replaces the CCC-1200)
 - New NRCS-CPA-1202 form – This will be the Contract form and Appendix. The EQIP and WHIP Appendix will be the same, CSP will have a different Appendix (replaces the CCC-1200).
 - New NRCS-CPA-152 - Contract Transfer Agreement.
 - New NRCS-CPA-153 – Agreement covering Non-Compliance.
 - New NRCS-CPA- 1155 – Conservation Plan or Schedule of Operations.
 - New NRCS-CPA-1156 – Revision of Plan/Schedule of Operations or Modification of a Contract.
 - New NRCS-CPA-1236 – Assignment of Payment.
 - New NRCS-CPA-1245 – Practice Approval and Payment Application.
- Redesigned ProTracts entry page with one-click access to contracting resources.
- EQIP data collection will be required entries for all contracts. This will include:
 - Livestock and Crop tables MUST be filled in for EQIP, WHIP, and CSP.
 - Crop acres will be broken out to “Predominant” crop grown.
 - Livestock will be one of 17 types.

Key State actions to prepare for FY 2006 (To be completed by SO staff)

- Prepare all cost lists in preparation for processing FY 2007 applications.
- Review and revise the practice average costs and the Conservation Practices Physical Effects (CPPE) tables in SmarTech for use in the Application Evaluation and Ranking Tool.
- Initiate revisions to Program Ranking Criteria.
- Coordinate the activation of new or replacement practice codes in Conservation Practice Standards (CPS) that will be used in FY 2007 ProTracts contracting activities with appropriate State staff.
- Customize ProTracts letters for submission to ProTracts Support.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the Harold Thompson, ASTC-Programs at 317-290-3200, ext. 320, Jim Dunaway, Ext 334, Joe Williams Ext 311, or John Poenisch at Ext 357.

/s/

JANE E. HARDISTY
State Conservationist

Attachment